

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-14, 17, 18, and 21 are currently pending. Claims 15, 16, and 20 have been cancelled without prejudice by the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 15, 16, and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over European Patent Application No. EP 0797338A2 to Tahtinen et al. (hereinafter “the ‘338 application”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,219,045 to Leahy et al. (hereinafter “the ‘045 patent”); and Claims 1-14, 17, 18, and 21 were allowed.

Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections of Claims 15, 16, and 20 are rendered moot by the present cancellation of those claims.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment and in light of the above discussion, the outstanding grounds for rejection are believed to have been overcome. The present application is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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